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FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Disarmament is inseparable from peace and is key goal of United Nations, Secretary-General tells Conference on Disarmament.

* Secretary-General to convene sixth round of talks on East Timor in Geneva tomorrow; to meet later with senior officials on situation in former Yugoslavia.

* Federal Republic of Yugoslavia expresses concern at German decision to send military personnel to former Yugoslavia; says augmenting UNPROFOR military potential will not help peace process.

* United Nations convoys come under fire from Bosnian Serb and Bosnian Government positions in Sarajevo; UNHCR aid convoys reach Gorazde and Zepa.

* DHA reports one hundred million people affected by serious floods in southern China; Government puts death toll at 1,200 and economic cost at $4 billion.

* Human Rights Committee to hold fifty-fourth session in Geneva from 10 to 28 July; to consider reports from five States on protection of civil and political rights.

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Disarmament is inseparable from peace and is one of the cardinal purposes of the United Nations, according to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. In an address to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva yesterday, he said disarmament was an essential factor in his efforts to promote a safer world. It fitted in quite naturally with preventive diplomacy, peace-keeping operations, and post-conflict peace-building.

Mr. Boutros-Ghali once again called for a halt to all nuclear testing without exception. The conclusion of a treaty prohibiting nuclear testing by 1996 was "a must", he said. Failure to reach agreement on that issue would directly undermine recent international efforts with regard to nuclear disarmament.

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More countries must be encouraged to support the cause of nuclear disarmament, as upheld in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), he continued. At the same time, it was important to deal with new regional ambitions that might give fresh impetus to trafficking in weapons of all sorts. It was necessary to take the broadest possible approach, as both conventional and nuclear weapons posed a threat to collective security.

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The Secretary-General had numerous appointments in Geneva today. Among them were meetings with the President of the International Court of Justice; the Minister of Trade and Economic Affairs of Egypt; the Secretary-General of the World Labor Federation; and the Secretary-General of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Tomorrow, the sixth round of talks on the question of East Timor will begin under the auspices of the Secretary-General. He will meet separately and then jointly with the Foreign Ministers of Indonesia and Portugal. Later in the day, he will convene a meeting of senior officials dealing with the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. On Sunday, he will leave Geneva for a three-day official visit to Greece.

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The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) has expressed concern at Germany's decision to send military personnel to the former Yugoslavia. In a letter to the Secretary-General dated 6 July, it said the decision contravened "the rule according to which troops of neighbouring countries and the former occupying countries are not to be engaged in the peace operation of UNPROFOR." Germany had ruthlessly occupied the territory of the former Yugoslavia in two world wars, and had played a negative role in the initial phase of the current crisis when it openly aided and abetted the secessionist Republics of Slovenia and Croatia.

The letter went on to say that augmentation of military potential under UNPROFOR auspices was not conducive to a peaceful and just solution of the crisis. On the contrary, "it enhances the possibilities for new provocations by the Muslim side, aimed at provoking an international military intervention against the Serbs". While the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia supported UNPROFOR's role as a force to keep, not impose, peace, it considered equal treatment of all parties to the conflict a precondition for the peace process.

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There was a slight increase in the number of firing incidents in Sarajevo today, according to a United Nations spokesman. United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) vehicles using the Mount Igman road were targeted from both Bosnian Serb and Bosnian Government positions. However, there was relative calm in Srebrenica, after heavy fighting yesterday in which at least two people were killed and six were injured. Dutch peace-keepers in the area were resuming their normal duties today. One observation post was badly damaged yesterday when their camp came under fire.

Meanwhile, a United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) convoy reached Gorazde yesterday -- the first into the town since 20 May. Another aid convoy reached Zepa. However, UNPROFOR troop-rotation convoys were unable to reach either Gorazde or Srebrenica. The spokesman noted that the Bosnian Government was considering imposing a tax on humanitarian organizations operating in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and had not actually done so as reported earlier in the week.

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One hundred million people have been affected by serious floods in southern China, according to the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA). The Chinese Government reported that 1,200 people had been killed and another 26,000 injured. It estimated the economic cost of the floods at $4 billion, noting that Hunan and Jiangxi provinces had suffered heavy crop damage.

The DHA said it had received no request for international assistance in relation to the flooding in China. Meanwhile, the Resident Representative in Beijing was following up on the situation with the Chinese Government.

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The Human Rights Committee will hold its fifty-fourth session in Geneva from 10 to 28 July. It will consider periodic reports from Ukraine, Latvia, Sri Lanka, the Russian Federation and the United Kingdom on measures taken by them to implement the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The Committee, composed of 18 independent experts, monitors the implementation of the Covenant in the 130 States which have ratified it. Representatives of the five States will introduce their reports on the promotion and protection of civil and political rights, and will respond to oral and written questions from Committee members.

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